

WASHINGTON NEWS

An Associated Press dispatch says: Former Governor Odell of New York told the senate committee investigating the campaign funds a story of Edward H. Harriman's \$240,000 contribution in 1904 which was so different from that told by George R. Sheldon as to greatly astonish the committee and the members asked Odell how he accounted for the variances.

Odell replied that Cornelius N. Bliss, treasurer of the republican national committee in 1904 might have "told white lies" to Sheldon about the matter.

Odell stated further that President Roosevelt asked Harriman to come to the White House to talk about campaign funds. Following this conference with Harriman the latter raised and turned over to the national republican committee \$240,000.

Harriman told him Roosevelt agreed if necessary to appoint Senator Depew as ambassador to France to allow the election of Former Governor Black to the senate.

Sheldon testified some time ago that Roosevelt knew nothing of the Harriman contribution until after election.

A news item in the Washington Post says: The senate, after five hours' work on the postoffice appropriation bill reached an agreement to vote on the measure.

Discussion of the bill was enlivened late in the day when Senator La Follette, speaking on a house provision granting to employees of the postal service the right to organize, deliberately charged officials of the postoffice department with rifling his mail in an attempt to delve into an investigation he was making into the postal service.

The Wisconsin senator declared that his mail had been "subjected to an espionage almost Russian in character," and he showed to the senators a bundle of letters which he said had been tampered with.

"Absurd" and "ridiculous" are adjectives applied to Senator La Follette's charges by officials of the postoffice department. It is declared positively that if the senator's mail has been rifled the crime was committed by somebody not connected with the department.

Dr. Charles P. Grandfield, first assistant, and, in the temporary absence of Mr. Hitchcock, acting postmaster general, said:

"We never have heard until now that Senator La Follette's mail has been tampered with. I think the senator is quite mistaken when he charged that officials of the postoffice department rifled his mail in an attempt to learn the result of an investigation he is making, or for any other purpose. As to the senator's statement that his mail was subjected to an espionage almost Russian in character, the charge is absurd, as no one in the postoffice department has the slightest interest in the replies of the clerks to the senator's inquiries.

"All mail addressed to members of congress in Washington passes out of the hands of the postoffice department when it reaches the senate and house postoffices."

Chief Inspector Robert C. Sharp was equally certain that Senator La Follette's charges were unfounded, and was emphatic in his denial of them.

"No attempt, of course, ever was made to watch Senator La Follette's mail or to ascertain the contents of any letter addressed to him or sent

out by him," said the inspector. "Any inspector caught opening a sealed letter not addressed to him would be subjected to the full penalty of the law. In fact, an inspector, having knowledge of the law on the subject, could not, in such circumstances, escape a penitentiary sentence."

Senator La Follette after making his charges said that men were removed from the railway mail service "for no other reason than that they joined organizations designed to improve labor conditions in the service." He cited several instances, including the case of George W. Nichols, who after 22 years of service in the department was suspended shortly after he became a candidate for the office in the Railway Mail Clerks' Protective association. The senator discussed the "gag rules" promulgated by President Roosevelt and President Taft. He had read into the Record several letters from mail clerks in response to his circular letters. He asserted that the officials of the department recognized only one organization, the Railway Mail association, which, he said, was dominated by the officials of the department.

Senator La Follette, in urging the adoption of this section, charged that postal clerks had been denied right of appealing to their congressmen for a redress of grievances. He said he had received messages from 12,000 to 15,000 postal employees. He thought clerks should have the right to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor.

By a vote of 121 to 71, T. E. Catlin, republican, of Missouri, was unseated as a member of the house of representatives. His democratic opponent, Patrick E. Gill, was given the place.

The house democrats have rescinded from their former position on the battleship proposition and have agreed to vote for one battleship.

The senate has passed the \$150,000,000 appropriation bill with a provision for the abolition of the pension agencies January 31, 1913.

Theodore Roosevelt denied the story told by former Governor Odell. "I am not interested in Mr. Odell's heresy statements," Mr. Roosevelt explained. He declared that any man who attempted to refute the statements which he had made in reply to the allegation that he had requested E. H. Harriman to raise funds for the 1904 campaign, branded himself as dishonest and untruthful.

Colonel Roosevelt at first said no honest man could question his actions at this time after he had explained them fully in the past, and that he would not enter into another discussion of the matter. He reconsidered his decision, however, and dictated this statement:

"I have not a thing to add to what was contained in my statement concerning the letters published at that time. These letters speak for themselves. Mr. Sheldon's testimony absolutely bears them out. I never directly or indirectly asked Mr. Harriman for a dollar, and he never spoke to me about giving a dollar to the national campaign fund. On the contrary, he asked me to help him get for Odell and the state campaign fund some large sums of money from the national campaign committee on the ground that my

election was safe anyhow; that it was essential to help Odell carry the state ticket. Let me repeat that every fact was set forth in full and in detail by me six years ago, while Mr. Harriman was alive. This statement contained my letter, written at the time to Mr. Harriman, and neither Mr. Harriman nor Mr. Odell ever attempted to answer this communication of mine, and no human being can so much as attempt to refute any statement I therein made without branding himself as dishonest and untruthful. Mr. Sheldon's statement which he, of his own accord volunteered to make, corroborated everything that I said.

"I was glad to have it published but the letters I gave needed no corroboration."

President Taft vetoed the steel bill and then the house passed the bill over his veto by a vote of 173 to 83.

The senate passed the house bill revising the cotton schedule.

William B. McMaster, American vice consul at Cartagena, Columbia, was shot and killed. An investigation is being made.

The house of representatives refused to override the president's veto of the executive, legislative and judicial bill. The vote stood 153 yeas to 107 nays, 20 short of the requisite two-thirds. The president objected to a seven-year tenure for government employes under the civil service and the abolition of the commerce court.

Opponents of the free toll provision for American ships, against which Great Britain made formal protest, carried their fight up to the last moment of the bill's consideration. Just before its passage Senator Root moved to strike out the section giving free tolls to American coastwise vessels, and Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia moved to strike out the provision for free tolls to American ships in the foreign trade. Both of these motions were defeated by overwhelming votes.

As the bill passed it would permit American coastwise vessels to pass through the canal free without conditions, while American foreign trade ships might pass through free if their owners agreed to sell the vessels to the United States at a fair price in time of war or emergency.

The great fight of the day centered about the provision to prohibit railroad-owned ships from using the canal. The broad terms of the original house bill, which would have required every railroad in the country to dispose at once of any such lines with which it might otherwise compete, were not accepted by the senate. This was modified so that railroads would be prohibited only from owning steamship lines that may operate through the Panama canal.

BRYAN'S WORK AT BALTIMORE

La Follette's Magazine: By his splendid leadership, his indomitable courage, his devotion to principle, William Jennings Bryan forced the democratic convention to name a progressive candidate for president. By doing so he aroused the bitter enmity of the Clark forces and William Randolph Hearst, both of whom, while announcing their support to the nominee of the convention, directed violent invective at the great commoner. Everywhere in the country recognition has been given to Mr. Bryan for thus forcing the issue upon the attention of the people. He crowned a long career of fidelity and service to the public interest by this latest and greatest service to the cause of progress.

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 "Why don't you marry him, he is rich and old?"
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